

Public School #74
(Oliver Cromwell School)
220 Homewood Avenue
Baltimore City
Maryland

HABS No. MD-233

HABS
MD,
4-BALT,
174-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MIDATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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PUBLIC SCHOOL #74
(Oliver Cromwell School)

Location: 220 Homewood Avenue, Baltimore (city), Maryland

Present Owner: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: Public School #74 is significant as one of the finest Italianate designs used for an elementary school building in Baltimore. The diagonal orientation is also unique among school structures. It is significant that the school was designed by municipal employees, rather than a private architectural firm, which was the case with most public school buildings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1903
2. Architect: Office of the Inspector of Buildings -- Baltimore City. Because of budget constraints in the City of Baltimore at the turn of the century, a number of public buildings were designed by the office of the Inspector of Buildings. Many architects were upset by this procedure and soon buildings were once again designed by private architects. It is noteworthy that this building is of excellent design considering that it was designed by City employees.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: City of Baltimore
4. Alterations and Additions: None

B. Historical Context: The community surrounding the school is primarily made up of turn of the century rowhousing. The school is contemporary with the surrounding neighborhood and stands as a landmark for its immediate community.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: This building is oriented diagonally from the north-south and east-west streets that the school fronts on. It is the only public school building of the time that is sited in this manner. This brick building's terra cotta trim is Italianate in design, and the building features an arched entranceway and hipped roofs. The entrance section of the front facade is slightly recessed. The large arched entrance of brick and terra cotta dominates the facade. Other details on the building include: arched windows, egg and dart molding, decorative keystones and a metal dentillated cornice with overhanging standing seam metal hipped roof.
2. Condition of Fabric: The building is in poor condition. Most of the windows are broken or boarded and the interior has been vandalised. The surrounding community is in fairly good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all Dimensions: 80' x 145'
2. Foundations: Brick
3. Walls: Stretcher bond brick with terra cotta trim.
4. Structure; Load-bearing brick walls with wood posts and trusses.
5. Chimneys: There is a plain chimney and two ventilation shafts at the center of the roof.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways: The main central entrance is located above a flight of stone steps. Two double wood panel doors are recessed into a large archway consisting of brick pilasters with terra cotta capitals and a brick archway with terra cotta keystone and decorative trim. A circular transom surmounts the double doors.
 - b. Windows: Most of the windows in the building are double hung, four over four wood windows. The second and third floor windows of the front and side are arched with stone sills and set into a decorative brick and

terra cotta arch with emphasized keystones. A few six over six windows are located above the entrance.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape: Hipped roof made with overhanging eaves. Material is standing seam, metal.
- b. Cornice: Dentillated and bracketed cornice.
- c. Dormers: Two hipped dormers are located at the rear of the building.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: See enclosed drawings. The building features a central hall with classrooms on either side of the hall and stairways at the ends of the hall.
- 2. Wall Finish: The building has plaster walls.
- 3. Openings:
 - a. Doors: The building features wood panel doors.
- 4. Decorative Finish: Some tin ceilings are extant in the building.

D. Site: The building has a diagonal orientation. A bridge behind the building leads to a black top playground area which is enclosed by a chain link fence. Rowhouses surround the school grounds.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

- A. Bibliography: Baltimore City Public School Annual Report 1904.
1961 School Building Directory.
Determination of Eligibility Documentation.

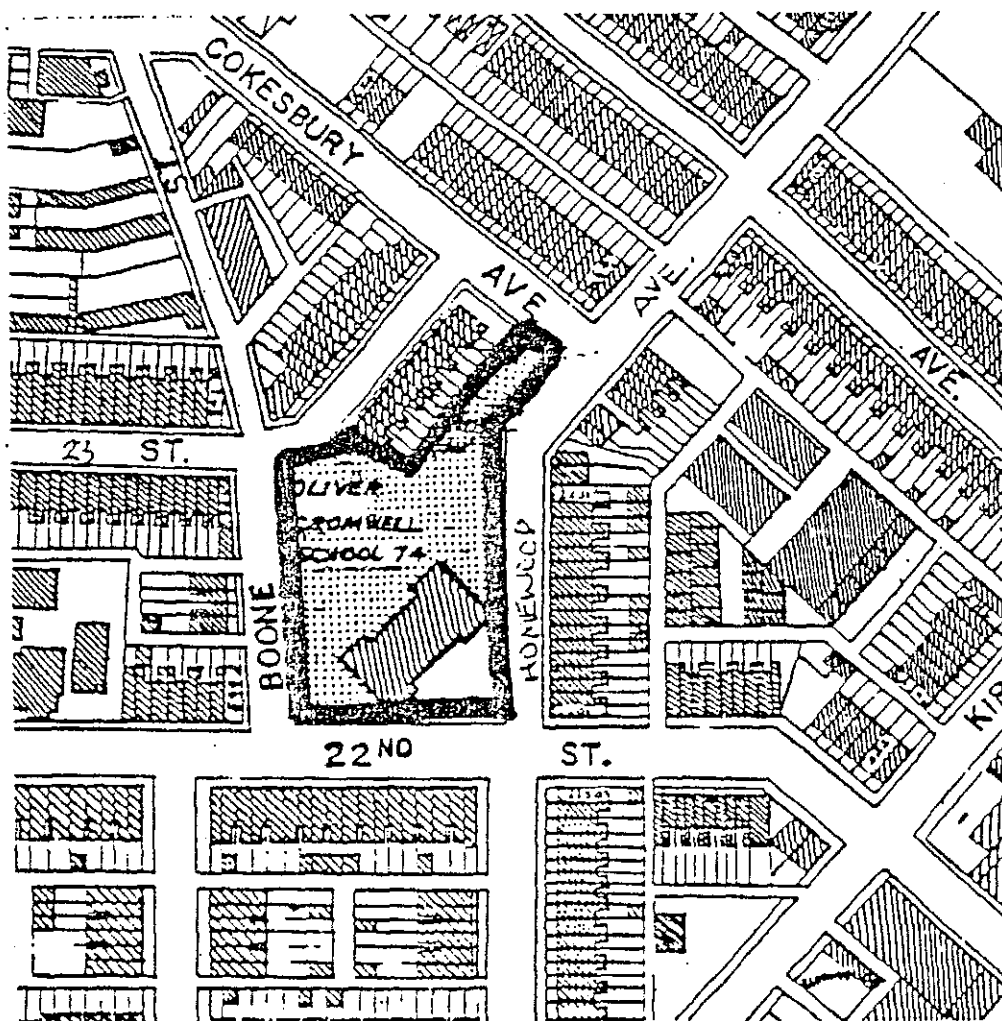
Prepared by: Fred B. Shoken
Historic Preservation Analyst
Commission for Historical and
Architectural Preservation
July 22, 1985

Transmitted to the Library of Congress in February, 1988 by Holly K. Chamberlain, HABS historian.

Public School #74
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DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION: PUBLIC SCHOOL #74

Historic Name: P.S. #74; Oliver Cromwell School
Address: Northeast corner of 22nd Street and Homewood Avenue
Boundary Description: See map; a 1½ acre site which is irregular in shape and located in the block bounded by 22nd Street, Homewood Avenue, Cokesbury Avenue, 23rd Street, and Boone Street.
Date: 1903
Architect: Baltimore City architects on the staff of the Inspector of Buildings



REPORT
—OF THE—
SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS
—TO THE—
BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS,
DECEMBER 31, 1903.

BALTIMORE, January 1, 1904.

To the Board of School Commissioners:

I have the honor to submit the following report for the year ending December 31, 1903:

New Buildings.—The following new buildings were completed by the Building Department during the summer and were occupied about the beginning of the fall term:

School No. 62, Walbrook avenue and Smallwood street.....	23	class-rooms
“ 74, Cromwell and Twenty-second streets.....	23	“
“ 83, Lakewood avenue and Orleans street.....	21	“
“ 84, Johnson and Heath streets.....	21	“

Also the following additions:

School No. 55, Hampden.....	12	class-rooms
“ 54, Huntingdon avenue.....	8	“
“ 115, Merryman's lane.....	2	“

The new building to be known as School No. 114, corner Mount and Saratoga streets, is nearing completion and should be ready for occupancy about March 1st.

The Schools Nos. 62, 74, 83, 84 are large brick buildings, three stories in height above a good basement; well planned

following more or less closely the arrangement of class-rooms, corridors and stairways as was provided in School No. 47. The stairways are well placed at the ends of the corridors; it would have been better had they been made fireproof, and in some instances the treads should have been wider and the risers not quite so high. The class-rooms are generally of the standard size, 26 feet by 32 feet, with good lighting, convenient cloakrooms, teachers' rooms, office, etc. The heating is by steam boilers, the requirement being 70 degrees in zero weather; and the ventilation is that known as the plenum system, the warmed air being forced into the class-rooms by means of fans or blowers at the rate of 30 cubic feet of air per minute for each pupil, and thence out of class-rooms through the vent flues. Latrines are provided in the basement, and drinking water and lavatories placed at convenient points. The architectural appearance of No. 62 and No. 74 is much better than is seen in No. 83 and No. 84.

Nos. 54 and 55 additions are two-story buildings, of brick, plain in appearance, but substantial, roomy, and well lighted. No. 55 is heated and ventilated by the same methods as those employed in No. 62, etc., but No. 54 is heated by two large portable furnaces, with no special provision for ventilation.

No 115 is a two-story frame addition, more or less temporary in character. It will be heated by stoves.

In the basement of School No. 74 rooms have been fitted up and furnished for Manual Training and Cooking School classes. Nos. 83 and 114 will be fitted up in like manner, and No. 62 will have the Cooking School only.

The entire grounds of School No. 74 should be paved with asphalt blocks. The play-grounds are limited and every available square foot should be made serviceable. If the children must play upon unpaved grounds, wet, and at times muddy, it will be next to impossible to keep the buildings clean. The building stands diagonally on the lot on the corner

OLIVER CROMWELL SCHOOL /4
Twenty-second St. and
Homewood Ave. (18)

TYPE: Elementary



Building stands obliquely across northwest corner at 22nd St. and Homewood Ave.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND RATING	
Date(s) of Constr.	1903
Material	Brick
Rating, 1951 School Facilities Survey	Fair
Defects Noted in Survey	

FACILITIES	NO	REMARKS
Auditorium	0	
Gymnasium	0	
Gym-Auditorium	0	
Cafeteria	0	
Library	1	
Shop	0	
Home Ec. Room	0	
Laboratory	0	
Classroom	26	3 used for Kdg.
Health Suite	1	
Conference	1	Speech and Social work

AREAS	SQUARE FEET
Total Site (1.47 acres)	63,815
Building	10,647
Floor Space ALL FLOORS, INC. BASEMENT	33,423
Play Space	34,016
Hard Surface	34,016
Soil	None
Ornamental and Service	19,152

REMARKS:



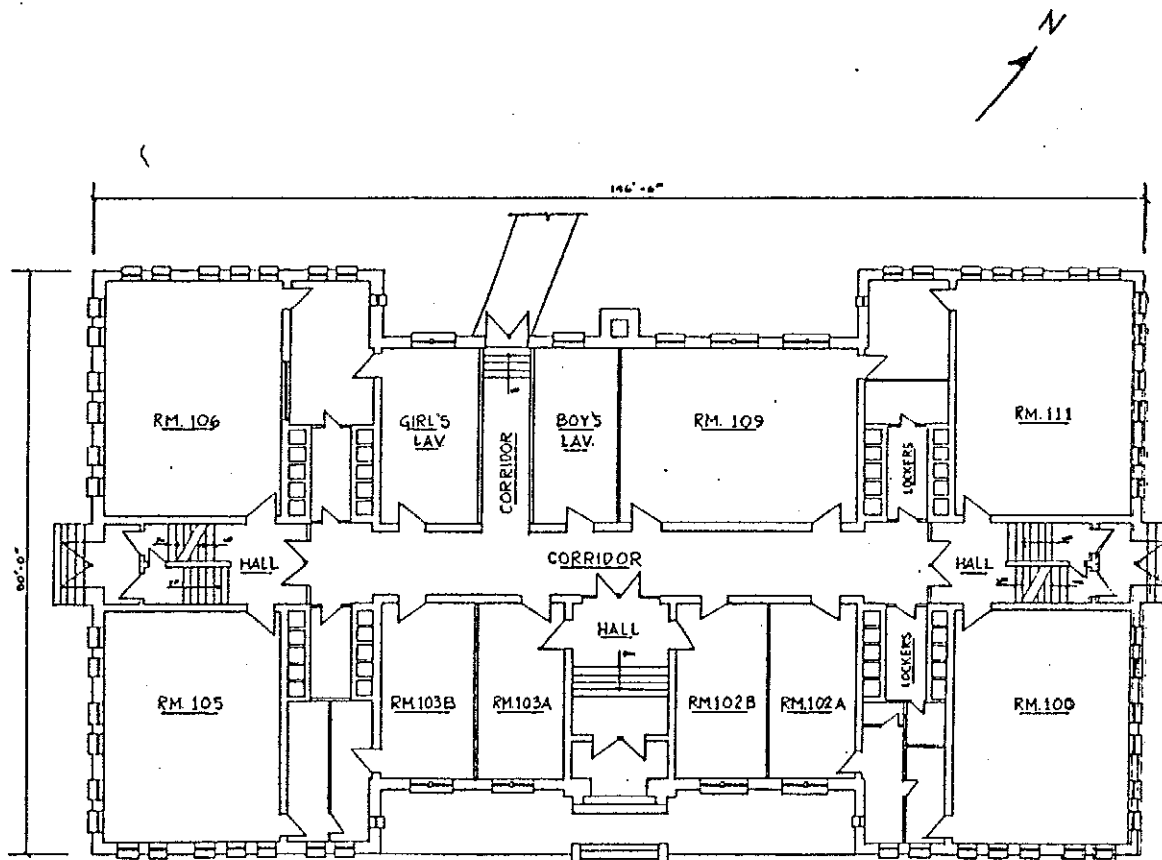
Corner of building pointing due north.



Playground in rear of building.

Revised 1/62, Map 1/63

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SCHOOL # 74
2200 HOMewood AVENUE
FIRST FLOOR PLAN